



## School Building Projects Advisory Council

### Meeting Minutes

June 19, 2014, 1:30pm

Legislative Office Building, Room 1B

#### Members Present

Pasquale "Bud" Salemi, Chair  
Gian-Carl Casa  
John Woodmansee  
Sara Bronin  
Antonio Iadarola

#### Members Absent

Lou Casolo

#### Attendance - Staff

Craig Russell  
David Barkin  
Jenna Padula  
Jason Crisco  
Timothy O'Brien

### Meeting Business:

Meeting called to order by Chair Salemi at 1:44pm.

#### Welcoming of new member

Salemi introduced the newest member of the Council, John Woodmansee, the designee of the Commissioner of Education.

#### Discussion regarding a legislative policy change on roof pitch

Salemi discussed the change in the state law on roof pitch requirements and the apparent \$5-8 million a year in savings produced from it.

#### Update on the administrative policy change requiring Unifomat, Level 3 reporting

Salemi discussed the change in cost estimate reporting to Unifomat for projects over \$2 million and the work to apply Unifomat to all projects.

#### Agenda Item 3, presentation of a report from staff on research conducted

Salemi/Barkin/Padula discussed the research by Division of Construction Services staff following up on the February 7, 2014 SBPAC Report and summarized the contents of the member agenda packets, including discussion of

- Standard contracts and procurement processes used in Massachusetts
- The application and approval process for school construction grants in Massachusetts, including discussion of
  - statement of interest process
  - 270 day approval process

- per square foot costs in Massachusetts being lower than in Connecticut
- model schools and incentives offered for school districts to use them
- competitive process with a \$500 million annual grant cap
- a dedicated funding stream from the state sales tax
- The five year capital plan in New York City
- The capital asset management program in New York City
- The planning involved in the New Haven school construction program and their use of an owner project manager

#### Agenda Item 4, presentation of a statistical report from staff

Salemi/O'Brien discussed the statistical report by Division of Construction Services staff, including discussion of

- The limits of the data available in current state databases and the need to build a new construction cost database system
- The amount of legislative school bond authorizations (about 30%) that are in legislative notwithstanding clauses, rather than on the Priority List
- A list of the recent school construction projects
- The proportion of state bonding authorization that goes to school construction

#### Agenda Item 8, discussion of strategic planning by DAS/DCS and SBPAC and regarding consultancies

Discussion (Salemi/Bronin/Russell/Padula/Barkin/Iadarola) was conducted on the role of consultancies in the work going forward, including

- The \$650,000 in state funding for program consultancies
- What consultancies may be needed, including for
  - cost estimating database
  - capital asset management/condition assessment
- The existing ED050 form and the weakness of its facilities condition information
- Whether the consultancy for condition assessments is to do the assessments or are just the building of the new database and standards – with discussion that the initial work would be to review the needs for a new assessment system and build the survey system
- Discussion of a consultancy for the cost estimating system, which could involve
  - assessing historical data to help build a maximum cost per square foot that allows schools to reasonably be built
  - assessing the kind of data needed for a cost estimating database system
  - building the cost estimating database system
- Whether building the cost estimating database system would involve a separate consultancy from the consultancy to assess historical data
- That there is no relational database to analyze school construction cost data in digital format
- That the hiring of consultancies should be based on decisions about the changes that should be made in the school construction grant program
- That most larger municipalities already produce condition assessments
- Whether condition assessments would become a gatekeeping tool for deciding what school projects are done
  - In Massachusetts, school construction projects must resolve deficiencies found through their assessments
- A need for decisions on the policy direction the SBPAC is taking to inform decisions on what consultancies to hire, such as
  - whether condition assessments would be made part of the process, to decide whether to hire a consultant for a condition assessment system
  - whether a cost estimating system would result in a limit on costs, to decide whether to hire a consultant for a cost estimating system
  - deciding the data that is needed to build a database
- That there are administrative needs and policy mandates on DAS/DCS that require the hiring of consultants to fulfill

- That a construction cost database system would inform policymaking and administrative needs that DAS/DCS already has but cannot perform as well because the available data is inadequate
- That there is already a statutory requirement for a maximum reimbursable cost per square foot that a cost estimating system is needed to implement effectively

Discussion (Iadarola/Salemi/Bronin/Russell) was conducted on the process for the Council to follow up with the recommendations in the February 7, 2014 Report, creating greater detailed recommended changes in the system for school construction funding, including

- Need for accurate and better cost estimating data to inform policymaking going forward
- That data has already been submitted under the new rule requiring Unifomat, Level 3 for projects over \$2 million, but no process exists for recording, storing and analyzing this data.
- That the cost estimating database should focus on data going forward because of the inadequacy, large variances and anomalies in data from the past
- That the consultant scopes of work should be presented to the SBPAC
- That DAS/DCS hires the consultants that provide assistance in the work of the SBPAC
- That the purpose of this SBPAC meeting has been to present research to SBPAC to prepare the Council for the policymaking discussion going forward
- That decisions should be made about the direction to be recommended in building a new program, including what systems from other jurisdictions should be used as models, based on knowledge about deficiencies with the existing system in Connecticut
- that a summary can be assembled of the research presented
- that recommendations will be presented at the next meeting, developed from the research conducted

#### Adjournment

**Motion** (Bronin) to adjourn. **Motion approved.**

Chair Salemi declared the meeting adjourned.